



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

RICK PERRY
GOVERNOR

January 4, 2012

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' recent decision not to renew Texas' Women's Health Program 1115(a) demonstration waiver as submitted places the health of Texas women in jeopardy by limiting their access to care.

The federal government should not be in the business of protecting abortion providers at the expense of the health of Texas women. Denying these women care because Texas law prohibits giving taxpayer dollars to abortion providers and their affiliates is unconscionable.

In 2010, more than 183,500 low-income Texas women enrolled in this program, which provides preventative health screenings and family planning services. Denying this waiver and withholding federal funds (which are paid in part by Texas taxpayers) will risk the health and safety of these women. Additionally, by limiting access to preventative screenings, more women will be forced to go to emergency rooms to receive services, driving up medical costs for everyone.

This waiver was granted during the previous president's administration. While the current administration may be committed to supporting abortion providers, that commitment does not justify this attempt to force Texas to disregard the will of Texans and state law, and it certainly does not justify the harm that the denial of this waiver will cause to Texas women.

I strongly urge you to recognize the sovereignty of our state law. On behalf of tens of thousands of Texas women, we respectfully ask that you renew the Women's Health Program 1115(a) demonstration waiver.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Perry".

Rick Perry
Governor

RP:kyk

cc: The Honorable Barack Obama

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